



TEXTS ADOPTED

P10_TA(2025)0161

Case of Ryan Cornelius in Dubai

European Parliament resolution of 10 July 2025 on the case of Ryan Cornelius in Dubai (2025/2796(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Opinion No 19/2022 of the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention (UNWGAD),
- having regard to Rules 150(5) and 136(4) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas Ryan Cornelius, a 71-year-old British national married to an EU citizen, has been arbitrarily detained in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) since 2008, following a conviction on false fraud charges related to a loan from Dubai Islamic Bank (DIB) for a property development project;
- B. whereas he was initially sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment and, just before his scheduled release in 2018, his sentence was extended by an additional 20 years under Dubai Law 37 of 2009, applied retroactively and in violation of international legal standards;
- C. whereas according to human rights organisations, the UAE Government has a concerning track record of arbitrary detention, unfair trials and allegations of torture;
- D. whereas according to independent auditors, the real estate development seized from Ryan Cornelius by DIB is demonstrably worth many times the amount of his outstanding debt to the bank;
- E. whereas the UNWGAD has declared his continued imprisonment a violation of international law, citing a lack of due process, coerced confessions, solitary confinement, denial of legal counsel and coerced signing of documents in Arabic;
- F. whereas Ryan Cornelius continues to be held in inhumane prison conditions, with his health deteriorating and without proper access to healthcare;

- G. whereas Dubai Law 37 of 2009 states in Article 7(1) that the convicted person (the debtor) shall not be sentenced to jail if that person is aged over 70; whereas Ryan Cornelius turned 70 in 2024 and as such should be granted an exemption under this law;
1. Condemns Ryan Cornelius's arbitrary and prolonged detention and calls for him and all other arbitrarily detained persons to be released immediately and unconditionally;
 2. Demands that he be granted an enforceable right to compensation and other reparations, in accordance with international law;
 3. Urges the Dubai authorities to provide him with access to adequate medical treatment and care in accordance with international standards on the treatment of prisoners, and to ensure an independent investigation into his arbitrary detention;
 4. Denounces the retroactive application of Law 37 of 2009 and urges the UAE to ensure fair trials and abolish the practice of debt-related imprisonment; notes that Ryan Cornelius remains in prison despite the authorities having seized assets valued at more than twice his original debt;
 5. Expresses solidarity with his family;
 6. Calls on the United Kingdom to take all necessary action to ensure Ryan Cornelius's release; urges the VP/HR, the EU Special Representative for Human Rights, the Member States and the EU Delegation to the UAE to raise his case in all bilateral engagements with the UAE and closely monitor the conditions of his detention;
 7. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the Council, the VP/HR, the EU Special Representative for Human Rights, the Member States, and the governments of the United Kingdom and the UAE.